



November 2006
FLSA: EXEMPT

PRINCIPAL PLANNER

DEFINITION

Under general direction, plans, organizes, oversees, coordinates and administers the most complex projects and programs within the Community Development Department; administers current, long-range, and/or environmental planning activities, including serving as project manager for complex development and/or environmental mitigation projects; administers complex and sensitive activities in such areas as zoning, redevelopment, housing, advanced and/or environmental planning; provides highly complex professional assistance to the Director of Community Development, the City Council, appointed boards and commissions, and others in areas of expertise; oversees, reviews and performs a variety of studies and prepares and presents staff reports; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from assigned management personnel. Exercises supervision over assigned staff and/or contract consultants on a project basis.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a single-position mid-management classification in the Community Development Department. The incumbent organizes and oversees day-to-day planning activities and is responsible for providing professional-level support to the Director of Community Development in a variety of areas. Successful performance of the work requires an extensive professional background as well as skill in coordinating departmental work with that of other City departments and public agencies. Responsibilities include performing and directing many of the department's day-to-day administrative functions. This class is distinguished from the Director of Community Development in that the latter has overall responsibility for all planning functions and for developing, implementing and interpreting public policy.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Manages and participates in the development and implementation of goals, objectives, policies and priorities for assigned programs; recommends within departmental policy, appropriate service and staffing levels; recommends and administers policies and procedures.
- Assumes management responsibility for all services and activities of the Community Development Department in absence of the Community Development Director, with major emphasis on current, advance, and/or environmental planning.
- Continuously monitors and evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery methods and procedures; assesses and monitors workload, administrative and support systems, and internal reporting relationships; identifies opportunities for improvement and reviews with the Director of Community Development.

- Assists in selecting, training, motivating, and evaluating assigned personnel; provides or coordinates staff training; works with employees to correct deficiencies; may assist in implementing discipline procedures.
- Participates in developing the work plan for the Community Development Department; meets with staff to identify and resolve problems; assists in assigning work activities, projects and programs; monitors work flow; reviews and evaluates work products, methods and procedures.
- Participates in the development and administration of the Department's budget.
- May serve as a liaison for the Community Development Department with other City departments, divisions, and outside agencies; attends meetings, as necessary; provides staff support to commissions, committees and task forces, as necessary; negotiates and resolves significant and controversial issues.
- Provides highly complex staff assistance to the Director of Community Development; prepares and presents staff reports and other necessary correspondence.
- Conducts a variety of organizational studies, investigations, and operational studies; recommends modifications to Community Development programs, policies, and procedures, as appropriate.
- Develops and reviews staff reports related to planning activities and services; presents reports to the Planning Commission, City Council and other commissions, committees and boards; performs a variety of public relations and outreach work related to planning activities.
- Participates on a variety of boards, commissions, committees, and task forces; attends and participates in professional groups and committees; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of Community Development.
- Confers with engineers, developers, architects, a variety of agencies, and the general public in acquiring information and coordinating planning and zoning matters; provides information regarding City development requirements.
- Receives, investigates, and responds to problems and complaints from citizens in a professional manner; identifies and reports findings and takes necessary corrective action.
- Conducts site inspections, including determining if projects are in compliance with laws, regulations and ordinances; makes recommendations regarding changes.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Administrative principles and practices, including goal setting, program development, implementation and evaluation, project management, and supervision of staff and consultants on a project basis.
- Principles and practices of budget administration.
- Principles and practices of employee and consultant supervision, including work planning, assignment, review and evaluation, and the training of staff in work procedures.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, codes and regulations.
- Principles and practices of contract administration and evaluation.
- Organization and management practices as applied to the development, analysis and evaluation of programs, policies and operational needs of the assigned function.
- General principles of risk management related to the functions of the assigned area.
- Recent and on-going developments, current literature, and sources of information related to planning and zoning.
- Principles, practices and procedures related to city and regional planning, particularly as related to the current, advance, and/or environmental planning process.
- Geographic, socio-economic, transportation, political, environmental, and other elements related to city planning.
- Operational characteristics, services and activities of the Community Development Department.

- Organizational and management practices as applied to the analysis and evaluation of programs, policies and operational needs.
- Modern and complex principles and practices of program development and administration.
- Modern principles and practices, technical legal issues, and research methods of municipal planning, zoning, urban economics, demographics, and environmental management.
- General concepts of architecture, landscaping, grading, drainage, traffic and transportation, and environmental engineering as they relate to the process of urban planning.
- Practices of researching planning issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- Modern office methods, practices, procedures and equipment, including computer hardware and software necessary for graphic presentation, mapping and database management, including Microsoft Office, Microsoft Project, City permitting software, and basic GIS concepts and applications.
- Practices of researching planning issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- Methods and techniques of effective technical report preparation and presentation.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for effectively representing the City in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, various business, professional, and regulatory organizations and with property owners, developers, contractors and the public.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service to public and City staff, in person and over the telephone.

Ability to:

- Act as the Community Development Director in his/her absence.
- Recommend and implement goals, objectives, and practices for providing effective and efficient services.
- Administer complex, technical and sensitive planning, development, and related programs in an independent and cooperative manner.
- Analyze, interpret, summarize and present administrative and technical information and data in an effective manner.
- Effectively administer a variety of land use, development, and/or environmental mitigation programs and activities.
- Identify and respond to issues and concerns of the public, Planning Commission, City Council, and other appointed boards and commissions.
- Interpret planning, zoning, and/or environmental programs to the general public.
- Read plans and specifications and make effective site visits.
- Manage and monitor complex projects.
- Plan, organize, schedule, assign, review and evaluate the work of staff and/or consultants on a project basis.
- Train staff in work procedures.
- Evaluate and develop improvements in operations, procedures, policies, or methods.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures and other written materials.
- Analyze, interpret, summarize and present administrative and technical information and data in an effective manner.
- Interpret, explain, and ensure compliance with City policies and procedures, complex laws, codes, regulations and ordinances.
- Conduct complex research projects, evaluate alternatives, make sound recommendations, and prepare effective technical staff reports.
- Effectively represent the Department and the City in meetings with governmental agencies, community groups and various businesses, professional, regulatory organizations, and individuals.
- Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record-keeping, and tracking systems.

- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence and independent judgment within general policy, procedural and legal guidelines.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

Equivalent to graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in urban planning, community development, business or public administration, or a related field and five (5) years of responsible professional urban planning experience, including two (2) years of supervisory experience. Possession of a Master's degree in urban planning or public administration with emphasis in urban planning is highly desirable.

License:

- Valid California class C driver's license with satisfactory driving record.
- Certification by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) is highly desirable.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to inspect City development sites, including traversing uneven terrain, climbing ladders, stairs, and other temporary or construction access points; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various City and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen, and make inspections; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups and over the telephone. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects necessary to perform job functions.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work partially in an office environment with moderate noise levels and controlled temperature conditions, and partially in the field and are occasionally exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, road hazards, vibration, confining workspace, chemicals, mechanical and/or electrical hazards, and hazardous physical substances and fumes. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives, and contractors in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

WORKING CONDITIONS

May be required to work on evenings, weekends and holidays.